

Minutes
Western Region Council Meeting
February 16, 2006
Cedar City, Utah

Attendance: Becky Cox, James English, Loya Garrett, Abe Johnson, David Kinder, Sarah Ohms (for Lis Barker), Larry Pearson, Sandy Phillips, Wayne, Shamo, John Slade, Leon Stewart, Jan Thompson, Mark Thompson, Rich VanAusdal, Libbie Zenger.

Guests: Laura Berghoff (Office of Rehabilitation – USOR), Jane Broadhead (DWS Salt Lake), Leslee Hintze (DWS Salt Lake), Suzette Hudson (DWS Salt Lake), Connie Laws (DWS Salt Lake), Leah Lobato (USOR), Lynn Purdin (DWS Salt Lake).

Youth Council: Becky Cox, Robert Depoe, Brian Olmstead, Wayne Shamo, Rich VanAusdal.

DWS Staff: Ann Barnson, Dennis Broad, Fran Cannard, Andy Hall, Kathleen Johnson, Kim Johnson, Kathy Leydsman, Stephen Lisonbee, Terry Lisonbee, Liz Lobato, Jackie Nielsen, Jolene Bundy.

Excused: Karen Alvey, Chad Johnson, Dale Peel, Joe Bernini, Gene Roundy, Kathy Walker, Doug Peterson, Blair Painter, LaVoy Starley, Joe Christopher, Janet Oldham, Katie Moore, Roene Shaw,

Absent: Karalee Smith, George Cross, Kristie McMullin, Brent Judd, Glenn Greenhalgh.

Minutes: Jolene Bundy

Welcome: - James English

James welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for their dedication in coming to the meetings. He also welcomed the guests attending and thanked them for being there.

James asked a couple of the members why they attend the council meetings and wanted each member to think about why they were there. Wayne Shamo said he comes because it is an opportunity to have a say in what the government does in the community. As an employer and a member of the community it gives him a chance to have some influence in government decisions. Sandy Phillips is a new member, attending the last couple of meetings. She said she still isn't sure of her responsibility and just how she can help out. James said he attends for the same reason as Wayne. It gives him a chance to have some input in what DWS is doing in his local community and encouraged everyone to take advantage of that opportunity as a member of the council by attending the meetings.

James said we have some vacancies on the Region Council. We need a small business representative from the 5 county area and one from the 6 county area. Small business is

15 or less employees. He asked for recommendations as to who would be good to fill the vacancies.

Approval of Minutes: - James

The minutes from the last meeting were presented. There were no changes and they were approved.

Agenda Item: Work Readiness Workshop – Kathleen Johnson

Andrea Sutton was unable to attend so Kathleen did it for her. Kathleen said 2 years ago there was a recommendation to hold some workshops to help employers retain employees. Much of the population is lacking in “soft skills” necessary to be able to keep a job. The State has developed some curriculum which is going out to all the ATC schools in the state. There will be classes on things like:

- Communication
- Working with Co-Workers
- Having a positive attitude

These are examples of soft skills and the classes that will be taught at the schools. The classes will be geared to the employee. They can pick and choose the classes that are needed. DWS counselors can refer clients to attend specific modules or the whole course. Employers will also be able to refer employees to take the classes to help them keep their job.

Agenda Item: Hiring Persons with disabilities – Leah Lobato and Laura Berghoff from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (USSOR).

Leah showed a presentation called *Recruiting and Employing People with disabilities....It Really Works!*

- Leah said many times people with disabilities are not hired because employers think they have a higher turnover, excessive absence, less productive, safety risks, too costly or demanding, and won't fit in. She said these are all myths. Realities are the opposite.
- It is expected that companies will continue to have difficulty finding enough skilled workers to fill jobs. Those with disabilities can be trained to fill many of the positions.
- She discussed the resources available in internal resources and external resources for educating employers and personnel. Leah had a CD called Workability. It is an ADA overview with resources for employers and employees. She showed some of the resources found on the CD and said she will see that each council member gets a copy of it. Leah said Vocational Rehabilitation can help overcome disabilities for work readiness with training and education, counseling and guidance.
- Leah introduced Laura Berghoff. Laura has been a job coach for a company and explained how she did job development and develop soft skills to help employees get and keep a job. She was their support to help them interact with co-workers.
- Leah introduced Leslie Hintze. She is now on the Governors Committee of Employment for People with disabilities. Leslie works with the Employers to get and keep people with disabilities hired and stay hired.

- Leslie talked about the Golden Key Award which recognizes Employers who work with disabled employees.
- She talked about *UBET* – Utah Business Employer Team. It is an employer driven committee sponsored by the Chambers of Commerce in Utah. *UBET* is a business-led network. It is a resource where employers can go to other employers to help solve problems. All businesses will see a short fall in qualified employees.
- 30% of all students at Utah State University have a disability. They are not always noticeable. Sugar Diabetes is a disability. ADA defines over 900 disabilities. The majority are not noticeable.
- Leslie encouraged employers from Southern Utah to start a *UBET* in their area.
- Leah said *Choose to Work* is another resource for Employers. It is a service partnership between DWS and Vocational Rehabilitation. It provides intensive services for the disabled. There are *Choose to Work* counselors in Cedar City, Delta, Manti, Richfield, and St. George.
- Leah talked about the Disability Mentoring Day. It has been once a year. It promotes career development for students and job seekers with disabilities and creates a pipeline of qualified workers from which employers can recruit.

Leah said those with disabilities have “*diversAbility*”. They know how to survive. They can work and want to work. If you have current employees, *USSOR* can help train and help keep those employees. If small businesses struggle with health care issues, they can help keep the employee in place so they can keep working.

Agenda Item: Region and Legislative Update – Jan Thompson

Jan introduced John Slade. He is a new council member, taking the place of Rex Dunn who retired. John is out of Provo and is working with the health care issues of the area.

- Jan talked about Youth Services. She said DWS took over the Youth Services when we lost our youth services provider about a year ago. To help provide those services, the Western Region DWS has hired Dennis Broad and Jackie Nielsen. She introduced Dennis and Jackie. Dennis and Jackie told some of their background and qualifications in working with the youth. (There is a “*BIO*” on Dennis and Jackie in the meeting information that was sent out.) Jan said the responsibilities of Dennis and Jackie is to find resources to provide the required 10 elements for the youth services.
- Jan introduced Andy Hall. He is the new Manager in the Nephi DWS office. Andy told a little about himself.
- Jan introduced Stephen Lisonbee. He is the new manager in the Kanab DWS office. Stephen told a little about himself.
- Jan passed out an update to the legislative update that was sent out with the meeting information. She briefly talked about the bills before the state legislature and what they are for and about the appropriation requests.
- Jan said in “general assistance” the numbers of cases are increasing yearly. In order to make any changes in eligibility requirements the changes have to go before the legislature. The numbers getting food stamps is also increasing. DWS is trying to get an increase in funds to help cover the matched funds from the

federal government to cover these increases. There is also an increase in requests for child care making child care costs also rise.

- The state DWS office is also requesting more funds to help with the eRep project. This is a computer program to replace PACMIS, which is an electronic payment system. It began in 1985 and has quickly become outdated. This involves 3 state agencies that will all be using eRep.
- Jan said under WIA, we are looking good in all outcomes.
- Jan said everything shows Utah is better off economically. Then why is the number of applications for food stamps increasing? Yet, percentage wise, compared to the nation, Utah is very low on people requesting financial assistance. The state is researching reasons why this is happening. They don't know if this is because of church influence or if other reasons factor into this.
- Construction Days is going to be held on March 21-22 at the Washington County fair grounds. It is a day where the youth can have hands on experiences with construction equipment and tools used in construction jobs.

Agenda Item: Taskforce Reports

Health Care Taskforce: - Lynn Purdin

Lynn said the committee talked about the health care issues of the area. Noel Bailey gave an update on the Weber State Nursing program that is beginning at Snow College in Ephraim which will be a big plus for this area. In 3 to 5 years this program will be administered by Snow College rather than Weber State College.

- Lynn said they discussed the possibilities of developing nursing instructors for the region and having clinical staff being able to become instructors. They talked about working with Vocational Rehabilitation on some of these.
- James asked what their goals were for 2006. Lynn said to increase the numbers of trained nurses.

Youth Council: - Becky Cox

Becky said Jane Broadhead was here from the state DWS office.

- Jane talked about Youth strategies and Goals.
- John Fullmer was there and talked about how Vocational Rehabilitation can work with the youth programs.
- The Incentive Policy was an action item and the changes to the policy were approved.
- Construction Days was mentioned and encouraged them to encourage the youth they work with to attend.
- Dennis Broad was introduced as the Youth Services counselor for 5 County and Jackie Nielsen for the 6 County areas. Their job is to find the resources necessary to provide the 10 elements to the youth. They have a Leadership training project they are working on for their area and talked about what their plans are for the projects.
- Transition to Adult Living (TAL) was discussed briefly.
- The Vacancies on the council were discussed briefly. The members were asked to let Becky or Ann know if they have recommendations to fill the vacancies.

- James asked what the goals are for the Youth council for 2006. Becky said it would be supporting and providing the best possible ways to help youth get into the targeted industries.

Economic Development – Bob Cranford

- Bob said they had some good comments regarding the Economic Summit held in November. They want to send out surveys to those attending as to what they thought about the summit.
- Economics implies making businesses successful. This is what they are working on.
- They talked about Agribusinesses. Utah is an agriculture state. They asked each member to send Kristie 2 examples of how to develop a business in agriculture.
- Competition is now world wide because of the internet. We have to find ways to make it work.

Marketing – Larry Pearson

Larry said they are focusing on their commitment to the council to get the executive summary out into the whole region. Libbie and Kristie tried to get funding but didn't have anything in hand to show them. Now, with something in hand they are going to try one more time to get the funding needed. There are 2 major businesses as sponsors but more is needed to get the necessary funding. A regional 12 page summary is scheduled be sent out in April. The Committee is hoping that once the communities see the summary and have one in hand the rest of the counties will support it. To do this, the committee is asking for \$500.00 to help pay for the April Issue to see if this will generate the necessary funds to keep it going. Abe Johnson made a motion for the marketing committee to get the \$500.00 they requested for the Regional Executive Summary. Libbie seconded the motion. The vote approving the motion was unanimous. Abe offered to help out in trying to get help from the area commissioners.

Executive Committee – James English

- James said an issue to consolidate the Fillmore and Delta DWS offices was brought before the Executive Committee. This would be accomplished by closing the Fillmore office. Jan introduced Terry Lisonbee, Manager of the Delta and Fillmore offices. She said Terry has done all the research to get the numbers and needs of both communities, the costs involved, and what they need to do to serve the population on the Fillmore side of the county. They believe they can still provide the services to Fillmore and the surrounding towns from the Delta office. The Fillmore telephone number will remain the same but will ring in the Delta office. If necessary, the employees will drive to Fillmore in order to provide the necessary services. Abe was concerned about keeping local services there but agreed that for a business it made sense to close that office. The committee voted to close the office.
- The Economic Summit was discussed. They felt the summit went over very well but suggested a survey be sent out to all participants requesting how they felt about the summit. This would be helpful if another one is planned for next year.

- The committee discussed “What can we do to be a better leader.” Discussions for a region council retreat or summit was discussed with keynote speakers or sessions on leadership.

Other Business – James

There was no other business. The meeting was adjourned. Next Meeting: May 19th.

Action Items February 16, 2006			
Item #	Person responsible for Action Item	Action Item	Date to be completed
1		None	

Conclusions/Decisions	
1	The Minutes of the Council Meeting on August 18, 2005 were approved
2	Approval of \$500.00 was given for the Marketing Committee to produce the April Regional Executive Summary.
3.	The Executive Committee approved the closure of the Fillmore DWS Employment Center.